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Peacebuilding Commission
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Organizational Committee

Summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 26 January 2011, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Wittig ..... (Germany)
later: Mr. Gasana ..... (Rwanda)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda (PBC/5/OC/2)

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its fourth session (PBC/4/OC/L.1)

2. **The Chairperson** recalled that the text of the draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its fourth session (PBC/4/OC/L.1) had already been provisionally approved by the Organizational Committee, pending its translation into all United Nations official languages.

3. *The report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its fourth session was adopted.*

Election of the Chairperson and other officers

4. **The Chairperson** said that after consultations among regional groups and members of the Organizational Committee, he understood that the Committee was prepared to elect the new Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons and to confirm the chairs of the five country configurations and the Chairperson of the Working Group on Lessons Learned.

5. *Mr. Gasana (Rwanda) was elected Chairperson for one year beginning 1 January 2011 by acclamation.*

6. *Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) and Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine) were elected Vice-Chairpersons for one year beginning 1 January 2011 by acclamation.*

7. **The Chairperson** said it was his understanding that the Committee had agreed that the Chairpersons of the country-specific configurations would represent members of either the Committee or the relevant country configuration which they would be chairing. Japan had offered to assume the chairmanship of the Working Group on Lessons Learned for the year 2011, based on consultations with Nepal.

8. *Mr. Seger (Switzerland) was confirmed as Chairperson of the country-specific configuration on Burundi; Mr. Grauls (Belgium) was reconfirmed as Chairperson of the country-specific configuration on the Central African Republic; Ms. Viotti (Brazil) was reconfirmed as Chairperson of the country-specific configuration on Guinea-Bissau; Prince Al-Hussein (Jordan) was confirmed as Chairperson of the country-specific configuration on Liberia; and Mr. McNee (Canada) was reconfirmed Chairperson of the country-specific configuration on Sierra Leone.*

Statement by the outgoing Chairperson

9. **The Chairperson** said that the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture conducted by the permanent representatives of Ireland, Mexico and South Africa had renewed confidence in the future of the Commission. He had recently proposed a "roadmap of actions" with a view to sharpening the Commission's focus on key priorities for 2011.

10. In 2010, progress had been made on a number of the objectives that he had set out when he took over the chair of the Organizational Committee. The Commission's role as a platform for building and strengthening partnerships with international financial institutions, regional and subregional organizations and relevant global initiatives had been enhanced. In particular, considerable progress had been made in the partnership with the World Bank in some countries on the Commission's agenda and the Commission had initiated dialogue with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. He had participated in the first global meeting of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding that had taken place in Dili, Timor Leste.

11. The Commission had enhanced the role of its instrument of engagement as a framework for establishing accountability and monitoring progress towards broader peacebuilding objectives. The most recent instrument of engagement, the Statement of Mutual Commitments on Peacebuilding in Liberia, had made Liberia the fifth country to be placed on the Commission's agenda. Cooperation among the five country-specific configurations had increased, as demonstrated by their joint statement at the recent Security Council debate on post-conflict institution-building. He had addressed the Security Council on several occasions in order to convey the Committee's views on the areas that could benefit from closer interaction between the Council and the Commission. The Council had shown increasing openness to advice of the Commission on how to create synergies between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The countries members of both the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission had played a crucial role in the efforts to establish a more structured relationship between the two bodies.

12. The Commission also continued to develop its relationship with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. It had contributed to several of the Secretary-General's reports and continued to engage in policy discussions on the role and activities of the Peacebuilding Fund. The Peacebuilding Support Office had demonstrated dedication and professionalism despite enormous capacity challenges and high staff turnover. Indeed, peacebuilding was evolving as a key feature of the role of the United Nations in post-conflict countries.

13. *Mr. Gasana (Rwanda) took the Chair.*

Statement by the incoming Chairperson

14. **The Chairperson** said that he would work to take forward the recommendations of the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture as required by General Assembly resolution 65/7 and Security Council resolution 1947 (2010). Peacemaking and peacebuilding were increasingly being recognized as two sides of the same coin.

15. His main priority would be national ownership, which was the key to effective peacebuilding. All political forces, civil society institutions and, most importantly women, needed to be involved in post-conflict reconstruction efforts. He would also focus on innovation in resource mobilization, encourage broader engagement by more post-conflict countries, and ensure the coordination of regional and international partnerships on the ground. The Commission should play a central role in streamlining international support mechanisms for peacekeeping by promoting coherence among the country-specific configurations, various United Nations agencies, the World Bank and other international actors. Regional organizations such as the African Union, and the regional economic communities were also playing increasing roles in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

16. His other priorities would include raising the Commission's profile through the appointment of goodwill ambassadors; ensuring that the Commission had more regular consultations with the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council; and ensuring that best practices were better reflected. Indeed, the Commission's role would be to provide broad guidance to the Working Group on Lessons Learned to permit it to focus on specific, relevant topics. Achieving that vision would require enhancing the role of the Peacebuilding Support Office, improving its cooperation with the Commission and reviewing its administrative structure to ensure that it had adequate permanent posts to discharge its mission.

17. Coming from a country that had experienced one of the worst conflicts of the previous century, he knew that both national resolve and international support were necessary for a post-conflict State to make progress towards reconciliation, reconstruction and development. He would dedicate his tenure to ensuring that the Peacebuilding Commission lived up to the hopes that had been placed in it.

18. **Ms. Cheng-Hopkins** (Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support) said that the outgoing Chairperson had achieved a great deal during a critical period that had included the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. His focus on building partnerships with the international financial institutions and regional organizations, notably the World Bank and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, had clarified the potential contributions of such relationships to peacebuilding. He had been instrumental in laying the groundwork for adding Liberia to the Commission's agenda and in forging a constructive relationship with the Security Council. She looked forward to the leadership of the incoming Chairperson during 2011, as the Commission began to implement the recommendations of the 2010 review.

19. **Mr. Abdelaziz** (Egypt), speaking as coordinator of the Group of African States for peacebuilding activities, said that the experience and background of the incoming Chairperson of the Organizing Committee would add value to the work of the Commission. The recommendations contained in the 2010 review were of particular importance to the Group of African States and the course of action set out by the incoming Chairperson would provide the means for their implementation.

20. **Mr. McNee** (Canada) said that his delegation had every confidence that the incoming bureau would work in a committed and focused manner.

21. **Ms. Dunlop** (Brazil) said that the election of a Chairperson from Rwanda would help to consolidate a comprehensive approach and to focus on the development of local socio-economic capacities. As

Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration, her country wished to reaffirm its support for the Commission's efforts to promote stability and development.

22. **Mr. Acharya** (Nepal) said that as Chair of the Working Group on Lessons Learned, his country had appreciated the opportunity to work with the outgoing bureau. Subject to the conclusion of informal consultations, it was his understanding that Japan would replace Nepal as Chairperson of the Working Group.

23. **Mr. Kleib** (Indonesia) said that when Indonesia had previously served as a member of the Organizational Committee, from 2006 to 2008, it had focused on engaging with the private sector. Peacebuilding required an integrated effort, so the adoption of such an approach was particularly welcome.

24. **Mr. Sial** (Pakistan) said that the priorities cited by the incoming Chairperson provided a clear course of action for the future.

25. **Ms. Hendrie** (United Kingdom) said that a number of important milestones had been reached over the previous year. The incoming Chairperson had set out clear and comprehensive priorities in order to build on that work.

26. **Mr. Sergeyev** (Ukraine) said that the incoming Chairperson had shown his commitment to peacebuilding in many other forums. In order to build on its successes, the Commission should take into account the recommendations contained in the 2010 review of the Peacebuilding Commission.

27. **Mr. Sumi** (Japan) said that during its term as a member of the Security Council, his country had worked to integrate the Council's work with that of the Commission. Subject to the conclusion of informal consultations, his delegation would be honoured to become Chair of the Working Group on Lessons Learned.

28. **Mr. Grunditz** (Sweden) said that the outgoing Chairperson had given the Committee a more focused, strategic and flexible approach. The incoming bureau was ideally placed to make further progress, especially in the field. In so doing, it should implement as many of the recommendations contained in the 2010 review as possible.

29. **Mr. Momen** (Bangladesh) said that as coordinator of the caucus of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in the Peacebuilding Commission, his delegation had appreciated the catalytic role of the outgoing Chairperson. The incoming bureau would be able to build on that momentum in order to work towards sustainable peace.

30. **Mr. de Laiglesia** (Spain) said that his delegation supported a flexible approach in the field, with clear priorities and an emphasis on peace dividends. At Headquarters, his delegation hoped to see closer relations between the Committee and the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council.

31. **Mr. Schwaiger** (European Union) said that the European Union had appreciated the efforts of the outgoing Chairperson, which had helped to fulfil the potential of the Commission, and looked forward to working with the incoming bureau.

32. **Mr. Burton** (United States of America) said that he welcomed the priorities identified by the Chairperson and, in particular, the central place of women. His country would actively support the strengthening and broadening of the Commission's resource base in order to address gaps in the profile of the United Nations.

33. **Ms. Smith** (Norway) said that her delegation would work to maintain and enhance the relevance of the Commission.

34. **Mr. Rosenthal** (Guatemala) said that the Commission was a relatively new forum and its present composition provided the right blend of change and continuity. Guatemala had acquired experience in peacebuilding at the domestic level and looked forward to being an active participant in the Commission's work.

35. **Mr. Marchetti** (France) said that the incoming Chairperson's dynamism and knowledge of the Great Lakes region would enable him to build on his predecessor's achievements. The Commission should focus on funding and coordination with its partners, drawing on the road map mentioned by the outgoing Chairperson to strengthen relations with field operations.

36. **Mr. Nwosa** (Nigeria) said that, as an African country, Nigeria particularly valued the work of the Commission and would offer its steadfast support.

37. **The Chairperson** recalled that the representatives of Switzerland, Belgium and Sierra Leone had been invited to participate in the current meeting, with the consent of the Committee members.

38. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mr. Seger (Switzerland), Mr. Lambert (Belgium) and Mr. Nallo (Sierra Leone) took places at the Committee table.*

39. **Mr. Seger** (Switzerland) said that the Burundi configuration would need every available form of political support. He welcomed the priorities cited by the incoming Chairperson including his intention to intensify relations with the Security Council. The latter could benefit from the views of the Commission and its country-specific configurations.

40. **Mr. Lambert** (Belgium) said that the country-specific configuration of the Central African Republic would face a number of challenges in the forthcoming year. The first round of the presidential and legislative elections had been held, but the results were still not in. The review of the national poverty reduction strategy paper, which would take place in spring of 2011, would harmonize the strategy paper with the strategic framework of the Commission, which would in turn be reviewed in the course of the year. In cooperation with the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, the country-specific configuration was organizing a round table of donors in support of development and peacebuilding in the Central African Republic. In order to prepare for those activities, the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, Mr. Jan Grauls, would travel to the Central African Republic from 2 to 5 February 2011. The terms of reference for the visit were being drafted in cooperation with the Peacebuilding Support Office and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) for circulation to members of the configuration.

41. **Mr. Nallo** (Sierra Leone) said that his country had appreciated the work of the outgoing Chairperson, and would offer his successor every possible support.

42. *Mr. Seger (Switzerland), Mr. Lambert (Belgium) and Mr. Nallo (Sierra Leone) withdrew.*

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.